

REMARKS

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-34 are now present in this application. Claims 1, 18, and 19 are independent. Claims 1-3, 5-7, and 14 have been amended and claims 18-34 have been added.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Priority Under 35 U.S.C. § 119

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging Applicants' claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119, and receipt of the certified priority document.

Information Disclosure Citation

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the reference supplied with the Information Disclosure Statement filed May 2, 2006, and for providing Applicants with an initialed copy of the PTO-1449 or PTO-SB08 form filed therewith.

Drawings

Since no objection has been received, Applicants assumes that the drawings are acceptable and that no further action is necessary. Confirmation thereof in the next Office Action is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Wolverton or Carter. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A complete discussion of the Examiner's rejection is set forth in the Office Action, and is not being repeated here.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 has been amended to recite a combination of elements in a washing machine including "a

casing”, “a tub disposed in the casing and adapted so that water is supplied into the tub”, “a drum rotatably mounted in the tub and adapted so that clothes are put in the drum and the water is supplied into the drum”, “a steam generator to heat water to obtain steam and to supply the steam into the tub and the drum”, and “a water-supply unit to supply the water into the tub and to the steam generator.” Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Carter and Wolverton.

The Examiner alleges that both Carter and Wolverton disclose water-supply units disposed at one side of the tub for supplying wash water into the tub and the drum and that Carter discloses a steam generator 1 and Wolverton discloses a steam generator 26.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner failed to specifically identify the water-supply unit in either reference, but merely alleged that they are present. However, in order to advance prosecution of the application, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite that “a water-supply unit to supply the water into the tub and to the steam generator.”

As such, neither Carter nor Wolverton shows or describes such an arrangement. Specifically, Carter discloses a boiler 1 that supplies steam via pipe 3 and that water is supplied to vessel 5 via pipe 12. *See* page 1, lines 51-53, 84-86, and 107-109. Carter is silent as to a water-supply unit that supplies water into both a tub and a steam generator. Therefore, Carter cannot anticipate claim 1 and this portion of the § 102 rejection must be withdrawn.

Wolverton discloses a steam nozzle 21 connected to a source of steam or water under pressure through line 22, and that during operation of the washing machine, the steam or water control valve 26 is actuated. Therefore, Wolverton discloses a single valve 26 that may be opened or shut to provide either steam or water via line 22. Consequently, Wolverton does not show or describe a water-supply unit that supplies water into a tub and a steam generator, as claimed. Furthermore, valve 26 does not show or describe a steam generator, which generates steam as opposed to providing a closeable opening connected to some steam source. Therefore, Wolverton cannot anticipate claim 1 and this portion of the § 102 rejection must be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 2-17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the early indication of allowable subject matter in this application. The subject matter of dependent claims 2 and 3 have been rewritten in independent form, with the exception of replacing the term "wash water" with "water", as claims 18 and 19, respectively. However, claims 2-17 have not been rewritten in independent form at this time, since it is believed that independent claim 1, from which these claims depend is allowable.

Claims 18-34

Claims 18-34 have been added for the Examiner's consideration.

As noted above, claims 18 and 19 contain the subject matter from allowable claims 2 and 3, respectively.

Applicants submit that claims 20-34 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1, and are therefore allowable based on their dependence from claim 1, which is believed to be allowable.

In addition, claims 20-34 recite further limitations which are not disclosed or made obvious by the applied prior art references.

Consideration and allowance of claims 18-34 are respectfully requested.

Additional Cited References

Since the remaining references cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but have merely been cited to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

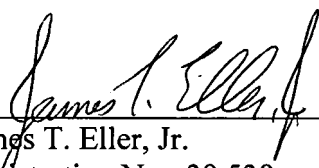
If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Chad D. Wells, Registration No. 50,8758, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: July 12, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By 
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